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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Bulgarian Standard of Living

1. During the past year the Bulgarian standard of living has improved slightly. Salaries are still low and insufficient and at present cannot satisfy more than the most basic living necessities. Expenditures for personal clothing, luxury items, and entertainment must be kept to a strict minimum. However, an improvement in the standard of living is evidenced by the occasional reductions in the prices of foodstuffs and by the appearance on the market of articles which were previously impossible to find, such as citrus fruits, olives, and various types of household articles. 25X1
2. In the eyes of the Bulgarians, these slight improvements, when compared to the hard past years, constitute notable ameliorations and also increase the hope that the standard of living will continue to improve.
3. In view of these measures, the population shows its satisfaction in the open, but, among close friends, they still confide their dissatisfaction with the present regime. Farmers particularly consider themselves to be defrauded and the regime has given them partial satisfaction by allowing them to sell, at any price agreeable to the purchaser, agricultural products over and above the quota they are obliged to give to the State warehouses.

Bulgarian Domestic Situation

4. The Bulgarian people hoped that in the difficult years following World War II some assistance would come from the outside, specifically an intervention on the part of the United States to bring to an end the regime which was tyrannizing the people of Bulgaria. As the years went by these hopes gradually diminished until today the Bulgarians have resigned themselves to the existing situation.

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5. According to informant, the Bulgarians are unable to conceive of any kind of solution for eliminating the Communist regime in Bulgaria, unless it be a war the outcome of which, because of the continuous increase of the Soviet atomic potential (which is widely propagandized by the Communists), is not considered to be necessarily an immediate victory of the United States; this belief is also held by anti-Communists in Bulgaria. "May an unforeseen event occur," they say, but as far as they can see it is useless to hope for it. This fatalistic attitude makes them remember the few good social reforms which were brought about by the Communist regime, and forget the freedom of the individual and the possibilities for private initiative which are offered by a democratic regime.
6. Reaction on the part of the population is either inexistent or very negligible. Informant never heard any talk concerning clandestine organizations. The control by police and Soviet officials in Bulgaria is always alert and propaganda against capitalist regimes, particularly against the United States, is always intense and violent. According to Communist propaganda, poverty and unemployment are prevalent in the United States and the workers are exploited by the big capitalists who are fomenting a war against the USSR in order to get ever greater profits.
7. The orthodox church carries out openly its religious activities. The popes are not interested in politics. However, the former head of the Bulgarian church, Metropolitan Stefan, who did not want to accept the agreement concluded between the Bulgarian government and the orthodox church, has been interned in Karlovo since 1948-1949.

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